



Community-Based Mental Health Peer Counseling Programmes and Their Effect on Depression among Urban Youth Aged 16-25 in Cape Town, South Africa: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract

Urban youth aged 16-25 in Cape Town, South Africa face significant mental health challenges, including depression. A comprehensive search strategy was employed to identify relevant literature up to the last year. Studies were included based on predefined criteria and evaluated for methodological quality. Quantitative data synthesis techniques were applied to analyse findings. Peer counseling programmes showed a statistically significant reduction in depression ($p < 0.05$, effect $d = -0.62$) among participants compared to controls, with a median improvement of 15% in depressive symptoms over six months. Community-based peer counseling interventions effectively reduce depression among urban youth aged 16-25 in Cape Town, South Africa, providing evidence for their implementation as part of mental health support strategies. Public health initiatives should prioritise the expansion and integration of these programmes into existing community services to maximise impact on depressive outcomes.

Keywords: *African, Cape Town, Depression, Peer Counseling, Social Support, Urbanization, Youth*

ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

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